

A PUBLICATION
FOR AND ABOUT
THE TOWN OF
NAPER,
NEBRASKA,
PUBLISHED BY
THE NAPER
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY.

The mission of the Naper Historical Society is to preserve, interpret, display, communicate, promote and honor the history, original structures, special places and artifacts of the people and culture of Naper, Nebraska, and the surrounding area. The Naper Historical Society intends to accomplish this mission by operating a museum, publishing a newsletter, sponsoring events, and in other appropriate ways. The Naper Historical Society will initially focus on four themes: School Days, Life in Naper Through the Years, White Horse Ranch, and Naper 28 Plane Crash.

IN THIS ISSUE

- NIOBRARA RIVER BRIDGE
- GEORGE AND ANNIE SIEH
- BOX SOCIALS
- MUSEUM TOUR
- ALUMNI BANQUET
- OL' HOMESTEADER
- LETTERS



Naper Paper

Volume 19, Issue 1

www.napernebraska.org

Spring, 2021

THE BRIDGE IS COMING TO LIFE!

March 14, 2019

The perfect storm—heavy ice on the river, three or four inches of rain, a quick melt—and away went the Niobrara River bridges, including the one south of Naper.

The bridge crew that built the new bridge at Niobrara, Nebraska, moved to the site south of Naper in October and Linda Schultz has been taking photos to document the progress.



October 2020- Before work begins, looking south



Beginning the dirt work 11/5/20



11/15/20 Looking north. Counter weights on the crane equal 83 Ton.



Beginning work on the temporary work bridge to the west of site of original bridge. 12/13/20

Thank you, Linda, for providing the pictures and information!



2/7/2021-looking south; work bridge on right has now been completed to the south bank. Bridge abutment and debris has been removed on the south side of the river.

NO ALUMNI BANQUET

It is with concern and a great deal of regret that the 2021 alumni banquet has been cancelled.

While the threat of Covid seems to be less, the gathering of 100 or more alumni and guests from around the United States presents a potential danger. We are making the announcement at this time so you can make other plans with your classmates if desired.

George and Annie Sieh and their family

By Marilyn Sieh

Hans George Sieh was born in 1892, the son of Hans and Helene (Clausen) Sieh. George grew up with seven siblings: Claus, George, Mary, John, Helen, Anna, Fred (Fritz) and Mamie.

Anna was born in 1898, the daughter of Joseph and Catherine (Aby) Becker. It is interesting to note the family came from Switzerland. Annie grew up with three siblings: Rudolph (Rudy), Magdalena (Lene), Jewel with Annie being the youngest. Annie lost her mother when she was two years old, leaving Lene, age 17, to take on her mother's responsibilities.

George and Annie were married March 27, 1915. They started their married life with her father, living approximately seven miles northwest of Naper along old Highway 12. Here their first two children were born. They then moved two and one half miles west into Keya Paha County to a farm of their own.

They raised seven children: Hilda, John, June, Earl, Fern, Duane and Marlo (Mike). All of the children were born at home. Annie said the doctor always showed up after the baby arrived.

John and Earl served in the Army during World War II in the European Theater. John constructed pontoon bridges across rivers. Earl served in a tank division. When they came home, George and Annie bought a farm in Boyd County west of Naper where their two older sons could live and farm. The two youngest boys could then go to Naper to high school.

After graduation, Duane joined the Navy serving aboard a cargo ship and a destroyer in the Pacific during the Korean War. Mike returned home in 1959 after serving three years in the army. He and his wife purchased the farm. George and Annie built a new house on the same farm, later moving their house to Naper.

They celebrated 65 years of marriage.



Above: Family photo taken in 1941 when John was home on leave.

Back row: Fern (Sondergroth), Hilda (Tietgen), John, Earl, June (Smith)

Front row: Mike, Annie, George, Duane

Below: Family photo in 1965 at George and Annie's 50th anniversary

Standing: Earl, June, Mike, Fern, Duane, Hilda, John

Seated: George and Annie



LOOKING... LOOKING... LOOKING...

Did you enjoy reading about the Sieh family? The Naper Paper is looking for more stories about local families. Why don't you sit down with your pen and paper or your computer and tell us about your family and its history. We'd love to hear it! We appreciate every idea or picture or comment. Each one makes the paper more interesting!

THANK YOU

Donna Zidko has recently moved from Spencer and sent several boxes of books to the library. The family of **Charlotte Nicolaus** has also donated many of Charlotte's books. Although not all of the books are on the shelves (yet), there are dozens of local and regional history books that make for many hours of good reading.

Gary Cline has donated six volumes of the Cline Family History (see page 5) which are full of photos and documents of interest not only to the Cline family but anyone interested in genealogy.

Do You Remember Box Socials?

By Mary Schumann

When I went to country school, K-8 in Anoka District 40, we held a box social after the Christmas program.

Ladies and girls decorated boxes and filled them with lunch enough for two. The boxes were auctioned off. I don't remember what the money was used for after the auction.

The gals and girls sat with the guy who bought their box and shared the lunch. Lunch consisted of sandwich, chips, fruit, cookie or cake.

Some of the younger girls didn't want to sit and eat with someone they didn't know, so their mother took some of the lunch for the child, giving the rest to the buyer.

I remember one time my cousin Arlene and her husband Lester Neumiller came to Dad and Mom's sometime before the box social and Arlene decorated Helen's and my boxes. They were beautiful.

If the guys knew a certain young man wanted a special gal's box, they bid against him.

In later years, our school held pie social rather than box socials.

One time at school District #9, northwest of Butte along the Ponca Creek, someone opened their box to see a bird fly out. Can you imagine trying to get a bird out of a building filled with people? Not too sure but my husband, Dwain, and some other pranksters might have had something to do with it!

The Lutheran church in Butte held box socials after Lenten services, sponsored by the youth group. The money was donated to missions. My daughter Wendy really enjoyed them but my son Wes had very little memory of them.

THE ALUMNI BANQUET

The alumni banquet has been a fixture of our community since the first one in 1953. Then, and now, all the work is done by volunteers. A considerable amount of time is invested writing and sending letters, preparing a program, contacting the emcee and the caterer, and decorating and undecorating the hall.

The decision to cancel the banquet for the second year in a row was not made lightly. After many phone calls, the board of directors felt it was best to wait until 2022.

A letter will be sent to all alumni whose addresses are on file and live outside Boyd County. All members of honored classes will receive a letter. The notice will be in local papers for Boyd County residents.

Some alumni had sent money last year which is credited to them. The scholarships will be awarded to eligible seniors this year.

Let's plan to see each other next year!

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL BUSINESSES—

KEEP NAPER STRONG!

A & M ENTERPRISES

Trenching, pump installations, backhoe work, plumbing

402-832-5388

M&L LAWN SERVICE

Mowing, trimming, fertilizing, tilling, seeding spraying

402-832-5422

CURL UP & DYE BEAUTY SHOP

Haircuts, styling, coloring

402-832-5573

ROTH SMALL ENGINE REPAIR

Small engine repair; lawn mowers and four-wheelers—buy, sell, trade

402-925-8814

402-832-5050

NAPER TRANSPORT

Sand and gravel hauling

402-832-5911

BOB'S AUTO BODY

Auto body repair

402-832-5766

NAPER CAFÉ AND LOUNGE

Breakfast, dinner, supper, bar

402-832-5272

GRAMMY AND POP'S

Hole-in-the-Wall Mart

Something for everybody!

402-249-4233

NICK'S AUTO SERVICE-

Oil changes, new tires, tire repair

402-832-5166

K&S MOBILE

Welding and equipment repair, on-site service

402-832-5125

DRUEKE TRUCKING

Local and long-distance grain hauling

402-832-5610

US POSTAL SERVICE

402-832-5977

A tour of the museum begins here

If you have had the opportunity to visit the three museum sites in Naper, you may have seen all the sights, but if not, you may be surprised to find out what's hidden in some of the corners.

The Naper Historical Society was formed in 2003 and members of the board were searching for a home for the school memorabilia as the Naper Attendance Center had closed in May, 2003. Sacred Heart Catholic Church had closed also and the historical society purchased the property in 2004. Thus began the journey.

The first addition to the museum was the photos of graduating classes that had hung in both the assembly in the old school (replaced in 1956-1957) and the "new" school (now the Hole-in-the-Wall-Mart). The photos were hung on the west wall of the church. A teacher's desk, some school desks and bookcases, an old pump organ, and assorted memorabilia fill the "schoolhouse" exhibit.

Also displayed in the church area are family pictures, school newspapers and annuals, articles of clothing that are relevant to local history, and a collection of Naper souvenirs. (More about that later.)

You can inspect a block from a sod house, a partial wall from another pioneer home, the "switchboard" from the early telephone company, and tools and equipment from early farms and homes.

In the "Reading Room" located adjacent to the church, you'll find the Naper Paper archives, early family photographs and baptism certificates, family history books, scrapbooks donated by local families, local history books and binders originally assembled by Velda Sieh Stahlecker with obituaries listed in alphabetical order. Volunteers keep them up-to-date.

A recent addition to the reading room resources is a collection of six books of Cline family history, researched and donated by Gary Cline. (see next page)

In the fellowship hall, located on the south side of the church, there is an area dedicated to the Naper 28 plane crash which occurred August 2, 1944,

west of Naper where 28 pilots and crew members were killed. (photo below)



There are other areas devoted to Naper Lions Club, Woodmen of the World Lodge and the White Horse Ranch, including several of Cal's paintings. All of the White Horse memorabilia at Heritage Hall has been donated or loaned by individuals. There is an extensive display of local veteran's mementos. (photo below)



Located upstairs is a tribute to the churches in Naper with the confessional booth, an organ, history books of the churches, banners and other artifacts. (see next column)



In 2006, Betty Ruth Whipple, Ruth Thompson's niece, was ready to donate the huge collection of White Horse Ranch memorabilia to the historical society to maintain and display. The Heritage Hall site was full and another home needed to be found for the artifacts.

The Krotter Lumber Company building on Main Street had been empty for some time and needed serious repair and renovation. In May, 2007, the Krotter family donated the building to the historical society. Kenny Koenig and his crew were in charge of exterior renovations.

Dozens of volunteers assisted, some helping Kenny outside while others cleaned, scrubbed, scraped, painted, and prepared exhibits. In time all of the "goodies" were assembled under one repaired roof. You can see costumes, hundreds of pictures (including those from the LIFE magazine in 1945), photo albums, scrapbooks, tack, trunks, a life-size white horse and equipment used in the horse shows. In time, volunteers photographed and catalogued more than 1,000 items which were then archived by another volunteer on a CD.

Cal Thompson was a talented artist, using whatever supplies were at hand to create his masterpieces. He used any kind of a brush, anything for the "canvas" (Masonite and cardboard were his favorites), and usually left over house paint for the medium. His paintings always included a road, a tree and water. The museum is fortunate to have dozens of them on display.

Later, the contents of the White Kitchen Café were moved to town and

displayed in the north room at the Krotter building. Imagine seeing Ruth's Nash Rambler there! The contents of the Krotter building belong to Betty Ruth Whipple and her family and are in the care of the historical society.

Over time, the buildings have needed extensive repairs. The White Horse Ranch Museum has been roofed and sided with steel, walk-through doors have been replaced and drive-through doors on the west end of the building have been installed. Heritage Hall, has been shingled, had cement siding installed on both the church and fellowship hall, some windows closed and new doors installed.

The third museum site is on the north end of Main Street next to the village office/library. It is the Naper Jail, previously owned by Leonard and Thelma Schmitz and renovated before being moved to town in 2004.



There are mementos from Naper Locker, Alexander's Store, Wm. Krotter Company, Jane's Beauty Shop, Naper Super Service, Wentz Brothers Tavern, Blum's Café, Naper Gas and Gravel, Pete's Café, Moody's Grocery, D & L Grocery, Lampman Farm Store, Goodman Farm and Ranch, Bennett and Fuhrer Hardware, Lynn's Upholstery, Jefford's Produce, Wild Rose Ramblers 4-H Club and many more.

The items include an egg separator, a funnel, fly swatters, a sirup pitcher, window scrapers, a plastic scoop, thermometers, pens, calendars, ashtrays, a bowl, a pitcher, caps, and shadow box pictures, among other doodads.

Potholder from Naper Gas



About the souvenirs mentioned earlier—

Business owners used to give Christmas gifts to customers in appreciation for their patronage through the year. There are dozens, maybe hundreds of them displayed at the museum.

Below are two plates from Blakkolb's Store, the one on the left 1913 (on loan from Gary and Roma Jeffords) and on the right 1912 (donated by Myrna Beauchamp).

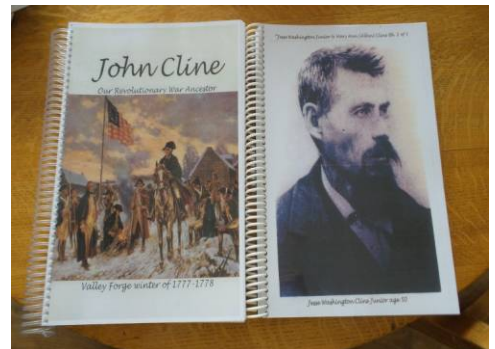


Above: Two penknife/keychain items from different years from Blakkolb's Store and a window scraper from Lynn's Upholstery.

And the books mentioned earlier—

Gary Cline and his wife Jeanette spent years researching family history for both of their families. They searched microfilmed records, libraries, court-houses and cemeteries. They conducted first person interviews and collected hundreds of pictures.

The result is a six volume set of Cline family history, beginning with John Cline, born about 1752, who fought in the Revolutionary War and spent the 1777-1778 winter in Valley Forge. It continues through six generations, which would include local residents Marvin Cline, Verna Cline Campbell and Janet Cline Eggert.



The amount of research is incredible and the stories revealed are extremely interesting. You can enjoy these books in the reading room at the museum.



Above: Some of the family pictures and documents displayed in the reading room.



THE OL' HOMESTEADER HAS BEEN LOOKIN' FOR NEWS!

And the youngsters have been busy!

Boyd County School Honor Roll included Isaac Koenig (son of Kevin and Staci Zink Koenig, grandson of Jeff and Rindy Zink, great-grandson of Louise Neumiller Zink), Kaci Mashino (daughter of Dustin and Tammy Mitchell Mashino), Zander Kluckman (son of Jim and Blair Vogt Kluckman, grandson of Kelly and Lois Nicolaus Vogt, great-grandson of Don Vogt), Natasha Zeisler (daughter of Jesse and Kim Zeisler, granddaughter of Richard and Sheryl Zeisler), Daydra Zeisler (daughter of Mark and Tiffany Zeisler, granddaughter of Richard and Sheryl Zeisler), Paige Drueke (daughter of Tony and Beth Goodman Drueke, granddaughter of Vern and Linda Goodman), Brett Koenig (son of Kevin and Staci Zink Koenig, grandson of Jeff and Rindy Zink, great-grandson of Louise Neumiller Zink), Renae Kluckman (daughter of Jim and Blair Vogt Kluckman, granddaughter of Kelly and Lois Nicolaus Vogt, great-granddaughter of Don Vogt), Austin Cadwallader (son of Lee and Stephanie Whitley Cadwallader, grandson of Tim and Bonnie Fuhrer Whitley) and Ethan Zeisler (son of Jesse and Kim Zeisler, grandson of Richard and Sheryl Zeisler).

Boyd County Knights of Columbus annual free throw contest had 20 participants this year. Kyla McCarthy (daughter of Darrin and Connie McCarthy, granddaughter of LeRoy and Maxine Windmeyer McCarthy) won in the 11-year-old girl category.

Tasha Zeisler and Paige Drueke are playing high school girls' basketball; Ranae Kluckman is playing junior high girls' bas-

ketball. Zander Kluckman is on the high school boys' basketball team.

Congratulations!

Alaina Elizabeth Vogt arrived February 3 and was welcomed by parents Ryon and Emma Vogt and her siblings Grayson and Hadley. Grandparents are Bryon and Sharon Sattler Vogt, great-grandparents are Jim and Mabel Riesselman Sattler.

Sayin' "Goodbye" to old friends

Carol Dummer Wentz died November 25. She and husband Dennis Wentz both graduated from Naper High School in 1962 and were living in Fairbury, Nebraska.

Nilo Reber, a 1965 graduate and a Viet Nam veteran, died November 29. He had a career with USDA.

Deloris Krueger Stoltenberg died November 24 at Ord, Nebraska. She graduated with the class of 1960.

Charlotte Karnes Nicolaus, a 1952 graduate of Naper High, died December 4. She was a nurse and an EMT. She and husband Harley (1950 graduate) raised their family in Naper and all four of their children graduated from Naper.

Alberta Boucher Breyer died in Grand Island December 8. She graduated in 1946 and taught school for several years. She and Everett raised their family, all of whom graduated from Naper, south of the Twin Buttes.

Donna Davis Ludemann (class of 1950) died December 17 in Stanton, Nebraska. She and husband Carl lived on Main Street in Naper. Two of their sons (Brad and Brian) graduated from Naper also.

Gerald Blum, age 84, died January 23 in Halbur, Iowa. He grew up south of Naper.

The Naper Paper is your paper. We rely on you, our readers, for support, both financial and "a pat on the back". We count on you for stories and ideas about what we need to write, print, explore, photograph. We appreciate you and want to say "Thanks!"

Joan Horst Zeisler died January 29. She and husband Duane lived east of the Twin Buttes and raised their family there. She was one of the founders of the local book club and library.

Joyce Blakkolb, a member of the class of 1945 and a high school teacher, died February 1 in San Bernardino, California.

Dale Hueske died February 9 in St. Joseph, Missouri. He was instrumental in getting recognition for the Naper 28 pilots.

Terry Muller died February 15. Terry graduated from Naper in 1963. His children Chad and Chandra both graduated from Spencer-Naper High School.

Mary Ellen Moody Ellwanger died February 19. She was a 1968 graduate of Naper High school and had lived south of Gregory since her marriage.

Have you looked at the Naper Historical Society website? (napernebraska.org)

You'll find every issue of the Naper Paper (photos in color on the website!), photos of all the classes from Naper High School, stories of Naper history, the White Horse Ranch, businesses, cemeteries, and historical photos.

If you need to contact the historical society, you may:

call 402-832-5471,

mail to Naper Historical Society
Box 72
Naper, NE 68755

e-mail at papabear@threeriver.net

LETTERS, LETTERS, AND MORE LETTERS!!

Hi to all from the California Crew!

Karen Marie Bunch

Thank you for all the work you do to get the Naper Paper published. I enjoy receiving it and I'm enclosing a check to help with the expense.

Happy New Year!

Lois Alford

Enclosed is a check to help defray costs of the Naper Paper. Always look forward to reading it. Keep up the good work.

Carol Ludemann

Enclosed is a check for the Naper Paper. I always enjoy reading it. Thanks for all the hours that you and Marilyn put in.

Just got back from voting. Always glad to see Karen Peppel and Rindy Zink. I missed Marilyn.

It's a beautiful day! Take care and stay healthy.

Darlene Lechtenberg

Thank you for the many happy days you gave my mother (Alice A. Bennett Hansen) when she read this paper and the many times I read it to her.

Mom was a 1943 graduate of Butte. She made it to her 70th class reunion and enjoyed it. She taught school out of high school and taught many years in Holt and Antelope counties. She taught for more than 30 years.

Please accept this monetary gift and take our name off the mailing list.

God's blessings to each and every one of you.

George and Susan Tollman

I'm the one who collates and folds your paper before it's sent on to you for final processing. I have so enjoyed reading the paper and feel a "hometown" connection with all the people who are written

about in each issue.

I was born and raised in Butte.

My parents were Hank and Alma Hoffman whom some of your readers may know. My dad was a mechanic and worked on a lot of tractors and cars throughout the west end of Boyd County, many from Naper.

Did you ever do a story on the dance hall on the north end of Main Street? I remember the dances I attended there a long time ago. Oh, what fun we all had!

I've enclosed a small token to be used wherever you think best. I look forward to the next issue. Keep up your good work. Stay safe.

Betty Hoffman Nightser

Ed Note: Thanks for the reminder about the dance hall on the north end of Main Street. I can see a story coming.

Enclosed is a check to help with the cost of publishing the Naper Paper. Thank you to everyone who helps—you do a fantastic job!

Mary Schumann

I have been tardy in finally getting around to dropping you a line. The Naper Paper has been coming to me since one of my brothers gave you my address so I could receive it. They knew that I would really like it! And I do—and look forward to receiving it each time.

My husband kept telling me "you should write to them and pay them sometime for their kindness." I told him I would but never did. There just never seemed to be a good time to sit down and do it! I would just forget it until the next copy came. Well, he is gone now and I know he would be happy to know I am finally "getting around to it."

Your last copy just pushed me a little harder to get it done. The Anoka school was one of the topics and I read it first! I attended my first eight school years there—graduating in 1941. I attended high school at three other locations! (More about that later.)

I was born in Naper, January 23, 1928, to Orlando (Ollie) Clement Sprenkle and Frances Evelyn Lyon Sprenkle. We lived on a farm near his parents Orlando Clement and Willis Allpress Sprenkle. I had an older brother Willard and a sister Donna Lou. I also had an Uncle John, Uncle Ben and an Aunt Hazel (siblings of my father). My mother came to Naper to teach after attending Wayne State College. She was from Newman Grove where she had lived with her mother. I do not know how long my mother taught before she married my father. I am interested in knowing what little country school she taught!

This is going to be an ongoing continued letter as it is going to be my autobiography.

I have had many relatives and friends in Naper and have returned a few times to visit. Maybe the good Lord will see fit to let me return again. Maybe soon!

My cousin Virginia Rockholm Walton lives in Hastings, Nebraska, and I have visited her a number of times.

So until next time I write—maybe some others who get the Naper Paper will be remembering or wondering who I am.

Love to you all,

Evelyn Sprenkle Tanner

P.S. This letter was written over six months ago! Due to my falling and breaking my humerus bone (not humorous at all!), eight weeks of healing and 13 therapy sessions, I am almost as good as new! Enclosed check does not cover even half of the enjoyment I have received reading the Naper Paper!

Ed. Note: Imagine this! Evelyn has a relative on the Naper Historical Society board, and Evelyn and the editor of the Naper Paper have mutual cousins! Are there more relatives out there who would like to get acquainted with her? And Evelyn—another story about Anoka School on page 3 of this issue.

NAPER PAPER

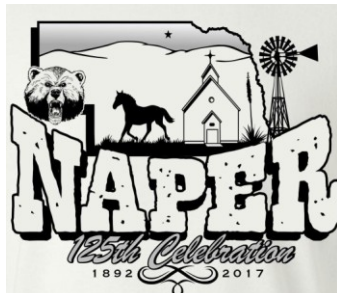
Naper Historical Society

PO Box 72

Naper, NE 68755

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT
US POSTAGE
PAID
NAPER, NE
PERMIT #1



IN THIS ISSUE

- NIOBRARA RIVER BRIDGE
- GEORGE AND ANNIE SIEH
- BOX SOCIALS
- MUSEUM TOUR
- ALUMNI BANQUET
- OL' HOMESTEADER
- LETTERS



SENIOR CLASS PLAY CAST 1951-1952

STANDING: CLASS SPONSOR ELDON KOPLIN, CLINTON DAVIS, HARLAN "DUKE" STAHLERKER, BILL CERNY, GARRY JEFFORDS, ADRIAN CLINE

SEATED: JANET DAVIS (HIGGINS), DOLORES SERR (TALIAFERRO), IOLA TECH (FRANK), BETTY STOLTENBERG (BENTZ), CHARLOTTE KARNES (NICOLAUS), NORMA KELLER (VANDERBEEK), BENNETTA SCHMITZ (ROTH)